



# Office of the City Manager

## Letter to City Commission

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**To:** The Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

**From:** The City Transportation Coordination Team (Chair: Sustainability Coordinator, City Engineer, Planning Director, Transit Director, Parking Director, Multimodal Coordinator, KWPD Traffic Liaison)

**Date:** 8/29/24

**Subject:** **Transportation Coordination Team Recommendation on Parking Fees**

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This letter to the City Commission is to provide information to the Mayor and City Commission related to recent budget workshop discussions regarding free and reduced-fee parking.

The Transportation Coordination Team (TCT) has been in operation since 2013 and meets monthly to enable transportation goals, including bicycle and pedestrian safety projects, transit projects, vehicle electrification, and parking. We were responsible for the coordination of the launches of Duval Loop, Key West Rides, Crosstown Greenway/Wickers, and Final Mile (new amenities at 87 bus stops) projects. Our core group consists of the Directors of Engineering, Planning, Parking and Transit, as well as the Multimodal Coordinator, Sustainability Coordinator, and KWPD Traffic liaison.

**The TCT does not recommend expanding free or reduced-fee parking.**

**The TCT does recommend not increasing parking rates in the Park N Ride or Truman Waterfront.**

We understand that financial relief is desired for residents in general and Employees in particular. We believe the City already offers many low to no cost options to get downtown and that what is missing is more outreach.

The City has taken great strides to make it safe and inexpensive to get to and from downtown:

- All transit offers free rides to seniors and reduced fares (40-50%) for students, disabled & military.
- Lower Keys Shuttle: \$8/\$2.50 with day/month pass. Downtown to Key Colony Beach (MM54)
- Duval Loop: Free to locals. Bus stops cover a 15-minute walk to 1/3 of the island.
- Workforce Express: \$4/\$0.83 with day/month pass. Stock Island to Bahama Village.
- Key West Rides: \$4/\$0.83 with day/month pass. Covers Key West to Stock Island.
- Conch Connect: Monroe County partner; \$2 one way for all. Covers Key West to Stock Island.
- Crosstown Greenway: Multiple safety upgrades from downtown to the Triangle.
- Bike Parking: There are 2,430 bike racks downtown for two wheeled bikes, trikes and ebikes.
- Scooter Parking: Free in over 760 designated spots downtown.

If traveling by car, the City provides 3 Permit options with great value at rates far less than other congested cities in Florida:

| Permit Name                 | Park Where   | # Spaces    | Hours Free        | Cost                             | Value                              |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Residential Permit          | “Residential” marked streetside in downtown neighborhoods  | 1008        | All day           | \$0.11 daily<br>\$39.13 yearly   | \$0 (these blocks are not metered) |
| Residential Permit          | 6 Lots: Park N Ride<br>Smathers Beach<br>Truman Waterfront<br>Conch Republic<br>Fire Station 2<br>Jackson Square | 797<br>more | 4 Hours           | <\$0.11 daily;<br>\$39.13 yearly | \$20 daily<br>\$7,300 yearly       |
| Employee Parking Lot Permit | Park N Ride<br>Truman Waterfront   | 353         | Up to<br>10 Hours | <\$0.07 daily<br>\$300 yearly    | \$50 daily<br>\$18,250<br>yearly   |
| Monroe County Permit        | Truman Waterfront  | 102         | 4 Hours           | \$25 annually<br>\$0.06 daily    | \$20 daily<br>\$7,300 yearly       |

**Expanding free or reduced-fee parking would reduce revenue as the increased number of residential cars will displace those who would pay full price.** Expanding reduced-fee or free parking for all residents will reduce revenue for the City specifically affecting the Affordable Housing Fund, the Transportation Alternatives Fund and Truman Waterfront maintenance funds. While some areas are more in demand than others, on average, the 2,101 metered parking spaces downtown earn the City \$17,500-\$18,000 day, to the tune of more than \$6,000,000 annually. For FY24, it was the equivalent of just over 32 millage points we didn’t have to charge our property owners. Under the current pricing, the City is choosing to relieve all Key West taxpayers, not just the ones who choose to drive downtown.

**Expanding free or reduced-fee parking would increase traffic,** as more locals may find it convenient to take their own cars downtown. Encouraging the behavior is counter to many TCT projects and programs focused on reducing traffic and increasing safety within our incredibly walkable, bikeable and bus-able island home.

**The Stantec Downtown Parking Analysis recommends higher meter rates for on-street parking.** The City Commission authorized \$50,000 towards a parking study as part of the Mallory Square Master Plan. The report (to be presented soon) recommends raising the rates for on-street parking and Mallory Square, but not for City parking lots. Based on utilization rates in the report, the TCT recommends that the extra \$1 for FY25 parking rates should be added to some lots but should not be added to the Park N Ride nor Jackson Square. This would incentivize parking in more distant locations and disincentivize circling for an on-street spot. By assigning a higher value to the on-street spots, long-term parking is disincentivized and each spot is more likely to be available for another customer. Holding reduced-fee parking rates steady for residents provides value for those who choose drive and park downtown.

**Reducing/Maintaining Fees Defunds Transit:** Transit receives most of the proceeds from parking meters at the Park N Ride. The Park N Ride will cost more this year due to new contract with Keys Energy Services. Maintaining \$5 Parking rates at the Park N Ride will reduce projected funds for Transit. The TCT recommends the Commission consider our permanent revenue recommendations for Transit:

- Denoting all Special Parking Event fees towards Transit
- Park by Plate Pilot
- Mandatory Transportation Plan Actions for Events
- After hours utilization of Bus Parking Area

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the TCT Chair, Sustainability Coordinator, Alison Higgins at [ahiggins@cityofkeywest-fl.gov](mailto:ahiggins@cityofkeywest-fl.gov).

Cc: Todd Stoughton, Interim City Manager  
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